



# Internships: Test Drive the Real World

*“Tell me and I will forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I will understand.”*

## Why intern?

Internships are an excellent way to enhance your résumé, expand your knowledge base, and get your foot in the job market. As a future professional in training, you gain hands-on, real world experience and skills in your area of study, generally under the supervision of a faculty advisor and the tutelage of an industry professional. Interning makes you more marketable to recruiters, and many now expect to see multiple internships on résumés prior to hiring.

Internships may be full- or part-time, paid or unpaid, national or international, with or without college credit. As a student, you can design your internship with your advisor to complement your studies. Or you can choose an internship posted at your career or employment center that suits you.

Not sure if a major, career path, or a certain company is right for you? Explore the pros and cons through an internship and make a more informed decision. Paid internships help with education and living expenses. However, unpaid internships demonstrate to recruiters your seriousness and commitment, and help you stand out from the competition. Best of all, more than half who intern are offered permanent jobs, often ahead of non-interns.

## An extended interview and preview

Internships work both ways: You get to evaluate the employer and the business, while the employer assesses your capabilities and compatibility. It's the real world, so whether paid or not, treat an internship as you would a permanent position: Be on time; dress professionally and appropriately; be courteous, enthusiastic, and dedicated; and DON'T complain!

Learn the employer's needs and challenges and help solve them. Demonstrate your creativity, capabilities, and productivity, as well as contribute fresh ideas, perspective, and energy. Internships are invaluable opportunities to apply classroom learning to real world demands, and to gain greater insight. Take on responsibilities and deliver. After all, you're marketing yourself in real time, so prove why you would make an ideal employee!

## Cash or credit?

For employers, internships are a cost-effective means to handle the workload. Interns most often work for little to no pay in exchange for work experience and college credits. For many, these benefits and the possibility of securing a future job are worth the effort, even hardship. Few interns will risk a golden opportunity by objecting.

However, an intern should not a slave be. There are Federal regulations and ethical guidelines that address fair labor. Depending on the company and requirements, pay scales range from zero stipend to minimum wage to an average of \$16 per hour and higher. Talk to your career counselor or former interns for interning leads and guidance:

- find out if you will be compensated and, if so, how much; some students simply cannot afford to intern even for college credit;
- ask what your duties will include; hours vary by industry and tasks can range from industry-related to menial;
- realize that interning is no guarantee of a job.

## “You're hired!”

The benefits of interning go beyond just the experience: The increased likelihood of a higher starting salary; networking contacts and professional relationships; a smoother transition from college to the workforce following graduation; even the inside scoop on upcoming job openings and opportunities.

Be more prepared for future interviews. Enter the workforce with more confidence and initiative, as well as greater problem solving abilities, communication skills, and teamwork awareness, all of which make you a more marketable job seeker. Get ahead: Add internships to your résumé!



## i n a nutshell:

Internships enable you to preview a career path and “try before you buy”:

- **Gain work experience; apply classroom learning to real world demands**
- **Market yourself in real time**
- **Network with professionals**
- **Travel; broaden your mind**
- **Increase your future chances of being hired**
- **Improve your interview skills; gain greater confidence**
- **Be in position for a smoother transition into the workforce**
- **Apply early; beat the summer/graduating crowd job search**

Get the experience you need, so you can get the job you want. Intern!